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SIEGE OF FORT ERIE,

AUGUST, 1814.

The battle of Lundy's Lane, near the Falls of Niagara, having reduced Brown's division from 3400 to 2500 men, *fit for duty*, left the major general, with several of the best chiefs of corps in service, disabled by wounds, that distinguished commander promptly despatched an express to Sackett's Harbor with orders to General Gaines, the senior Brigadier, to take command of the division.

Gaines arrived at Fort Erie on the 4th of August where he met the crippled division, actively employed in throwing up breast-works to strengthen their encampment. The small unfinished work called *Fort Erie*, designed for but one company, and armed with but three badly mounted cannon, formed the salient angle of the encampment, which extended near 700 yards along the margin of the Lake South West of Fort Erie.

The British army, under the command of Lt. General Drummond, consisting of 3600 regulars with 600 Canadian volunteers and Indians, total 4200 men, had followed the division from Chippewa and were occupied in fortifying their encampment and constructing batteries from 700 to 1000 yards of the right flank of Gaines' position.

On the 5th of August a brisk cannonade commenced on the part of Drummond, accompanied by shells and rockets. This attack was promptly met by Gaines' artillery under Hindman, Towson, Williams, Biddle and Fauning. The cannonade and bombardment continued during the day, and occasionally during a part of the night, for the remaining part of the month; accompanied by frequent conflicts between our *Rifle, Infantry and Volunteer Corps* and the enemy's light troops. In these daily sorties the loss on both sides were often greater than that occasioned by the cannonade and bombardment: our Light Troops however were uniformly victorious.

Gen. Gaines had given orders that in the event of a *night attack* no man should fire a gun until ordered, on pain of being cut down; and that orders to fire should not be given until the enemy had arrived at the *abattis* or breastwork. These orders were faithfully obeyed by the 21st;—the consequence was that in 25 minutes the first column of attack was five times repulsed with immense slaughter; once the enemy charged around the *abattis* through the Lake. Near one hundred of their killed fell upon our *abattis*, and within six feet of our line of battle, many of them powder burnt.

The final repulse of the enemy at this point resulted in the loss of near 300 killed, wounded and drowned, without the loss of a man on our part: the enemy having made the attack *without flints*, relying altogether upon the *bayonet*, with which they were unable to reach the line of the brave 21st, or the battery of Towson.

This point of attack being secured within the first half hour of the battle, Gen. Ripley, Majors Wood and Towson were directed to take care of the left wing, the commanding general having been called to the extreme right by an animated attack upon that wing. Here the conflict raged with great vivacity until day light. The enemy's extreme left column, commanded by Lt. Col. Scott, attacked with much gallantry that part of Gaines' right wing extending from the Lake to the Fort, defended by the skeletons of the 9th, 11th and 25th Infantry, under Colonel Aspinwall, with a detachment of Hindman's Artillery, under the youthful Douglass, with Harding's and Broughton's companies of volunteers of General Porter's brigade. These corps, though reduced by the bloody conflicts of July to small heroic fragments, were immovable as the rock upon which they stood. The enemy's left column were repulsed, with the loss of their leader, Lt. Col. Scott, with many of their officers and men.

During all this time nothing could have been more brilliant than the fire from Towson's battery on Snake Hill, composed of field 6's and 5½ Howitzers.

In the meanwhile all remained quiet on our right—the cannonade of the previous day had been kept up until nearly 1 o'clock of the morning of the 15th. The officers stationed in that quarter Captain Williams, Lieutenants M'Donough, and Watmough, therefore were keenly on the alert. A few minutes only had elapsed, when the tramp of feet was heard in front of their batteries—every thing was prepared—the guns accurately levelled, and shotted with round, cannister and grape—the port fires lighted and all hands animated with the liveliest enthusiasm and confident of the result. It was soon ascertained that the noise in front was produced by the retreat of our own picket guard—the officer of which was falling back within our lines under a misapprehension of his orders, at the first gun fired on our left. He was instantly ordered back to his post, under the peril of being blown to atoms if he delayed a moment.—Scarcely had he advanced 300 yards before he encountered the heads of Drummond's and Scott's columns advancing to the assault silently in the dark. A short struggle ensued—the voices of the British officers were distinctly heard, urging their men onward. The plain was instantly swept by the most deadly fire of artillery and musketry—nothing was heard in front of us but the shout of the struggling foe mingled with groans of agony and death. A short silence ensued,—the enemy were repulsed. We instantly mounted our parapet and rent the air with loud huzzas, calling upon our brave foe to try it again. It was tried again, and with like success, and again the air was rent with our shouts. Had we had the force to have made a sortie at this moment, the British columns must have surrendered. After a short interval during which our fire was unremittingly kept up, it was found that the enemy had again rallied, but compelled to change their point of attack, were advancing against the Curtain connecting the right Bastion with the central Block House on which was mounted a fine long 18 pounder. Not a moment was lost: the guns were immediately brought to bear upon this point. The enemy had already reached the ditch, and had begun to mount the Curtain, when Lieutenant Watmough discharged with his own hand the 6 pounder, which raked it and formed part of his command. The effect was terrible, the gun was instantly reloaded and again discharged, and so repeatedly with like effect; five times did the brave Drummond lead his gallant troops up to this fatal trench, and as many times was he driven back. We clearly saw them retreating over the plain and again our shouts rent the air—our guns were turned so as to sweep the plain in the line of their retreat.

Thus were the enemy again repulsed at their second point of attack. The brave Drummond, however, resolved to throw no chance away. The ditch in front of the right Bastion was at least 15 feet deep. The ground however, had been dug away in front of the Curtain to the extent of the ground plan of a very considerable work intended for the better security of the Camp, so as to bring it down nearly on a level with the bottom of the ditch. At his

last repulse the gallant Colonel quickly saw the advantage this gave him. Rallying as many of his men as possible he turned them into this ditch where they were secure from the fire which had proved so fatal to their comrades. Here they remained quiet so long that we fancied the repulse had been complete and final, and that the enemy had retired from the field. The fire of our guns was still kept up, and with as much animation as ever. Immediately after a general discharge and while the men, having reloaded, were engaged with their handspikes in running the guns up to battery, an officer suddenly sprang through the embrasure at which Lieutenant Watmough was engaged, and in jumping down lighted upon the gun which the Lieutenant was at the moment depressing with a quoin. The pike with which he was armed passed over Lieutenant W's left shoulder, and penetrated the thigh of a soldier directly in his rear, an inch or two above the knee.

This officer was the brave Colonel Drummond: he was instantly followed by two sailors and three soldiers. A desperate struggle now ensued—the sailors were almost immediately disabled and Colonel Drummond received the thrust of a bayonet in the left side. The enemy continued to pour in. Our own Infantry under Colonel Trimble who had so nobly defended the Curtain, committed the error of retreating within the Stone building, instead of rushing at once to the aid of the Artillery on the Bastion. The consequences were fatal—the Artillery were overwhelmed.—Captain Williams and Lieutenant M'Donough were killed. Lieutenant Watmough was knocked down by a blow from the butt end of a musket, and subsequently prostrated by a bullet in the breast. The success of the enemy was only temporary. Colonel Drummond was killed and most who remained with him shared the same fate.

The battle lasted upwards of three hours and was hotly contested from first to last. The British force was nearly 5000 strong and all veteran troops, led by most distinguished officers. The American force, effective for duty, a little over 1800.

Captain Williams who commanded the 18 pr. had left it when the action commenced and joined his comrades Lieutenants M'Donough and Watmough, at their more exposed position on the Bastion. His heroic character urged him to the point of danger and honour. As he put his foot upon the platform, and the enemy were advancing, he exclaimed to his friend, "now Jack, now my boy, now for Brevets"—on that Bastion he received his death wound. A native of Philadelphia, he was the son of the distinguished Colonel Jonathan Williams of revolutionary memory, and brother of Henry J. Williams Esq. of the Philadelphia Bar. M'Donough was likewise a native of Philadelphia, and a most brave and heroic man. His widowed mother still resides among us and is only consoled for his loss by the heroism of his death. Lieutenant Watmough, though believed at first to have been mortally wounded, gradually recovered and continued in the service of his country, though sorely afflicted, until the fall of 1816. He then resigned and has since been raised by the kindness of his fellow citizens, to distinguished civil trusts.

The official letters on both sides, given below show how well the contest was maintained.

OFFICIAL LETTERS.

Lieutenant-general Drummond's arrangement and order for attack.

[Secret.] *Head-Quarters, camp before fort Erie,*
14th August, 1814.

ARRANGEMENT.

Right column—lieutenant-colonel Fischer, king's regiment.

(Volunteers) De Watteville's.

Light companies, 89th and 100th regiments.

Detachments royal artillery—1 officer, 12 men, and a rocketeer, with a couple of 12-pound rockets.

Captain Eustace's picket of cavalry—captain Powell, deputy-assistant quarter-master-general, will conduct this column, which is to attack the left of the enemy's position. Major Court.

Centre column—lieutenant-colonel Drummond.

Flank companies, 41st regiment.

Do. do. 104th do.

Royal marines 50.

Seamen 90.

Detachments of royal artillery, 1 subaltern, and 12 men—captain Barney, 89th regiment will guide this column, which is to attack the fort.

Left column—colonel Scott, 103d regiment.

Captain Elliott, deputy quarter-master-general, will conduct this column, which will attack the right of the enemy's position towards the lake, and endeavour to penetrate by the openings betwixt the forts and entrenchments, using the short ladders at the same time, to pass the entrenchment, which is reported to be defended only by the enemy's 9th regiment, 250 strong.

The infantry pickets on Buck's road will be pushed on with the Indians, and attack the enemy's picket on that road. Lieutenant-colonel Nicholl, quarter-master-general of militia, will conduct this column. The rest of the troops, viz.

1st battalion royals.

Remainder of De Watteville's regiment, Glengary light infantry and incorporated militia will remain in reserve, under lieutenant-colonel Tucker, are to be posted on the ground at present occupied by our pickets and covering parties.

Squadron of the 19th light dragoons, in the ravine, in the rear of the battery, nearest to the advance, ready to receive charge of prisoners and conduct them to the rear.

The lieutenant-general will station himself at or near the battery, where reports are to be made to him. Lieutenant-colonel Fischer, commanding the right column, will follow the instruction which he has received: copies of which are communicated to colonel Scott and lieutenant-colonel Drummond, for their guidance.

The lieutenant-general most strongly recommends a free use of the bayonet.

The enemy's force does not exceed fifteen hundred fit for duty, and those are represented as much dispirited.

The ground on which the columns of attack are to be formed, will be pointed out; and orders for their advance will be given by the lieutenant-general commanding.

J. HARVEY, D. A. G.

Parole—"Steel." Countersign—"Twenty."

Report of the killed, wounded and prisoners, taken at the Battle of Erie, U. C. August 15, 1814.

Killed, left on the field, 222—wounded, left on the field, 174—prisoners, 186. Grand total, 582.

Two hundred supposed to be killed on the left flank, near Snake Hill, (in the water) and permitted to float down the Niagara. The number on the right flank, near the woods, could not be ascertained.

Given at the inspector-general's office, Fort Erie, U. C.

NATHL. N. HALL, *Assist. Ins. General.*

Brig. Gen. E. P. Gaines, &c.

Report of the killed, wounded, and missing of the left division of the United States' army, commanded by brigadier-general Gaines, in the action of the 15th August, 1814, at Fort Erie, U. C.

Adjutant-general's Office, Fort Erie, Aug. 17, 1814.

Corps of Bombardiers—Killed, 1 private.

Artillery—Killed, 1 captain, 1 subaltern, 2 privates—wounded severely, 1 lieutenant, 3 privates; slightly, 6 privates—missing, 1 lieutenant, 3 privates.

1st Brigade—9th Regt. slightly wounded, 1 private.

11th Regt. killed, 3 privates—wounded dangerously, 1 sergeant, 1 private: severely, 4 privates; slightly, 4 privates—missing 1 private.

19th Regt. killed, 5 privates—wounded dangerously, 1 subaltern; severely, 1 sergeant, 4 privates; slightly, 1 corporal, 8 privates.*

2d Regt. killed, 2 privates—wounded severely, 5 privates.

* *2d Brigade*—21st Regt. killed, 2 privates—wounded severely, 1 subaltern, 3 privates; slightly, 3 privates—missing, three privates.

23d Regt. wounded severely, 2 subalterns, 1 private; slightly, 3 privates—missing, 2 privates.

1st and 4th Rifle Corps—wounded severely, 1 captain, 1 private—missing, 1 private.

Grand Total—1 captain, 1 subaltern, 15 privates, killed.

1 subaltern, 1 sergeant, 1 private, dangerously wounded.

1 captain, 4 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 21 privates, severely wounded.

1 corporal, 25 privates, slightly wounded.

1 lieutenant, 10 privates, missing.

NAMES OF OFFICERS.

Artillery—Captain Williams and lieutenant M'Donough killed, defending the bastion.

*This regiment was stationed in the Fort.

Lieutenant Watmough wounded severely, defending the bastion.

Lieutenant Fontaine missing, thrown from the bastion.

Infantry—19th Regt. ensign Cisna wounded dangerously, in defence of the fort.

19th Regt. lieutenant Bushnell, do. severely.

23d Regt. lieutenant Brown, do. do.

Do. lieutenant Belknap, do. in defending the picquet guard which he commanded.

4th Rifle regt. captain Birdsall, accidentally wounded, whilst defending the fort, by one of his own soldiers.

Report of the killed and wounded of the left division of the United States' army, commanded by brigadier-general Gaines, during the cannonade and bombardment, commencing at sun-rise on the morning of the 13th inst. and continuing without intermission till 8 o'clock, P. M. re-commenced on the 14th at day-light with increased warmth, and ending one hour before the commencement of the action at Erie on the morning of the 15th.

Adjutant-General's Office, Fort Erie, Aug. 15, 1814.

Corps of Artillery—Wounded severely, 2 privates; slightly, 1 captain, 2 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 3 privates.

11th Regt. Wounded severely, 2 sergeants, 2 privates; slightly, 3 privates.

16th Regt. wounded severely, 1 subaltern.

21st Regt. killed, 4 privates—wounded severely, 3 privates; slightly, 2 privates.

22d Regt. killed, 1 sergeant—wounded severely, 2 corporals, 2 privates; slightly, 3 privates.

23d Regt. killed, 1 private; wounded severely, 1 private.

Rifle Regiments, 1st and 4th.—killed, 1 corporal, 2 privates; wounded severely, 3 privates; slightly, 1 private.

Grand Total—1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 7 privates, killed.

1 subaltern, 2 sergeants, 2 corporals, 14 privates, severely wounded.

1 captain, 2 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 12 privates, slightly wounded,

OFFICERS WOUNDED.

Artillery—Captain Biddle, lieutenant Zantzinger, adjutant-lieutenant Watwough.

Infantry—Lieutenant Patterson, 19th regiment.

Killed, George Carryl, 25th infantry, orderly to general Gaines.

ROGER JONES, *Assistant Adj. General.*

BRITISH OFFICIAL ACCOUNT.

Return of killed, wounded and missing of the right division, in the assault of Fort Erie, on the 15th August, 1814.

Killed—1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 51 rank and file.

Wounded—1 major, 9 captains, 11 lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 1 master, 20 sergeants, 3 drummers, 262 rank and file.

Missing—2 captains, 3 lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 1 adjutant, 1 midshipman, 41 sergeants, 3 drummers, 486 rank and file.

Total—1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 12 captains, 15 lieutenants, 4 ensigns, 1 adjutant, 1 master, 1 midshipman, 62 sergeants, 7 drummers, 799 rank and file.

Officers killed—1st or royal Scots, captain Torrens; 8th or King's regiment, lieutenant Noel; 103d regiment, colonel Scott; 104th regiment, lieutenant-colonel Drummond.

Officers wounded—royal navy, captain Dobbs and lieutenant Stevenson slightly; Mr. Harris, master, severely.

1st or royal Scots, captain Rowan, severely; lieutenant Vaughan slightly.

8th or king's, lieutenant Young, slightly.

41st regiment, flank companies, captains Glew and Bullock, severely; lieutenant Hailes, slightly; ensign Townsend, severely.

89th regiment, captain Barney, acting assistant engineer, severely.

100th regiment, lieutenant Murray, wounded and prisoner; volunteer Fraser, severely.

103 regiment, major Smelt and captain Gardner, severely; captain Colclough and lieutenant Charlton, severely and prisoner; lieutenant Fallon, severely; lieutenant Cappage, Jun. dangerously; lieutenant Meagher, slightly, lieutenant Burrows, Hazen, and ensign Nash, severely.

104th flank companies, captain Leonard and lieutenant M'Laughlan, severely.

Officers missing—general staff, captain Elliott, deputy assistant-quarter-master-general.

Royal navy, Mr. Hyde, midshipman.

41st flank company, lieutenant Gardner and ensign Hall.

103d regiment, captain Irwin; lieutenant Kaye; ensign Huoy; lieutenant and adjutant Pettet.

EDWARD BAYNES, *Adj. Gen. N. A.*

Copy of a letter from major-general Brown to the secretary of war, dated,

Head-quarters, Camp, Fort Erie, Sept. 29th, 1814.

SIR—In my letter of the 19th inst. I briefly informed you of the fortunate issue of the sortie which took place the day proceeding: But it is due to the gallant officers and men, to whose bravery we are indebted for our success on this occasion, that I should give you a more circumstantial and detailed account of this affair.

The enemy's camp I had ascertained to be situated in a field surrounded by woods, nearly two miles distant from their batteries and intrenchments, the object of which was to keep the parts of the force which was not upon duty, out of the range of our fire from Fort Erie and Black Rock. Their infantry was formed into three brigades, estimated at twelve or fifteen hundred men each. One of these brigades, with a detail from their artillery, was stationed at their works, (these being about five hundred yards distant from old Fort Erie and the right of our line.) We had already suffered much from the fire of two of their batteries, and were aware that a third was about to open upon us. Under these circumstances I resolved to storm the batteries, destroy the cannon, and roughly handle the

brigade upon duty before those in reserve could be brought into action.

On the morning of the 17th the infantry and riflemen, regulars and militia, were ordered to be paraded, and put in readiness to march precisely at twelve o'clock. General Porter with the volunteers, colonel Gibson with the riflemen, and major Brooks with the 23d and 1st infantry, and a few dragoons acting as infantry, were ordered to move from the extreme left of our position upon the enemy's right, by a passage opened through the woods for the occasion. General Miller was directed to station his command in the ravine which lies between Fort Erie and the enemy's batteries, by passing them by detachments through the skirts of the wood—and the 21st infantry, under general Ripley, was posted as a corps of reserve between the new bastions of Fort Erie; all under cover, and out of the view of the enemy.

About twenty minutes before two, P. M., I found the left columns, under the command of general Porter, which were destined to turn the enemy's right, within a few rods of the British intrenchments. They were ordered to advance and commence the action. Passing down the ravine I judged, from the report of musketry, that the action had commenced on our left, I now hastened to general Miller, and directed him to seize the moment, and pierce the enemy's intrenchment between batteries No. 2 and 3. My orders were promptly and ably executed. Within thirty minutes after the first gun was fired, batteries No. 3 and 2, the enemy's line of intrenchments, and his two block-houses, were in our possession. Soon after battery No. 1 was abandoned by the British. The guns in each were spiked by us, or otherwise destroyed, and the magazine of No. 3 was blown up.

A few minutes before the explosion, I had ordered up the reserve under general Ripley. As he passed me at the head of his column, I desired him, as he would be the senior in advance, to ascertain as near as possible, the situation of the troops in general, and to have a care that not more was hazarded than the occasion required: that the object of the sortie effected, the troops would retire in good order, &c. General Ripley passed rapidly on—soon after, I became alarmed for general Miller, and sent an order for the 21st to hasten for his support towards battery No. 1. Colonel Upham received the order, and advanced to the aid of general Miller. General Ripley had inclined to the left, where major Brooks' command was engaged, with a view of making some necessary inquiries of that officer, and in the act of doing so was unfortunately wounded. By this time the object of the sortie was accomplished beyond my most sanguine expectations. General Miller had consequently ordered the troops on the right to fall back—observing this movement, I sent my staff along the line to call in the other corps. Within a few minutes they retired from the ravine, and from thence to camp.

Thus one thousand regulars, and an equal portion of militia, in one hour of close action, blasted the hopes of the enemy, destroyed the fruits of fifty days' labour, and diminished his effective force one thousand men at least. I am at a loss to express my satisfaction at the gallant con-

duct of the officers and men of this division, whose valour has shone superior to every trial. General Porter, in his official report herein enclosed, has very properly noticed those patriotic citizens, who have done so much honour to themselves, by freely and voluntarily tendering their services at a dangerous and critical period.

As the scene of action was in the wood, in advance of the position I had chosen for directing the movements of the whole, the several reports of the commandants of corps must guide me in noticing individuals.

General Miller mentions lieutenant-colonel Aspinwall, lieutenant-colonel Beedle, major Trimble, captain Hull, captain Ingersoll, lieutenant Crawford, lieutenant Lee, and particularly ensign O'Fling as entitled to distinction.

Lieutenant-colonel M'Donald, upon whom the command of the rifle corps devolved, upon the fall of the brave and generous Gibson, names adjutants Shortridge of the 1st, and Ballard of the 4th regiment, as deserving the highest applause for their promptness and gallantry in communicating orders. Of the other officers of the corps, he reports generally, that the bravery and good conduct of all was so conspicuous, as to render it impossible to discriminate.

Major Brooks, to whom much credit is due for the distinguished manner in which he executed the orders he received, speaks in high terms of lieutenants Goodell, Ingersoll, Livingston, and ensigns Brant and O'Fling of the 23d—particularly of the *latter*. Also of captain Simms, lieutenants Bissel, Shore and Brinot of the 1st infantry, and lieutenant Watts of the dragoons.

Lieutenant-colonel Upham, who took command of the reserve after general Ripley was disabled, bestows great praise upon major Chambers, of the 4th regiment of riflemen, attached to the 21st infantry, as also upon captain Bradford and lieutenant Holding of that regiment.

My staff, colonel Snelling, colonel Gardner, major Jones, and my aid-de-camp, major Austin and lieutenant Armstrong were, as usual, zealous, intelligent and active—they performed every duty required of them to my entire satisfaction.

Major Hall, assistant inspector-general, led a battalion of militia, and conducted with skill and gallantry. Lieutenant Kirby, aid-de-camp to general Ripley, was extremely active and useful during the time he was in the action.

Lieutenants Frazer and Riddle were in general Porter's staff; their bravery was conspicuous, and no officers of their grade were more useful.

The corps of artillery commanded by major Hindman, which has been so eminently distinguished throughout this campaign, had no opportunity of taking a part in the sortie. The 25th infantry, under colonel Jessup, was stationed in Fort Erie to hold the key of our position.

Colonel Brady, on whose firmness and good conduct every reliance could be placed, was on command at Buffalo with the remains of the 22d infantry. Lieutenant-colonel M'Ree and lieutenant-colonel Wood of the corps of engineers, having rendered to this army services the most important, I must seize the opportunity of again mentioning them particularly. On every trying occasion I have reaped much benefit from their sound and excellent advice. No

two officers of their grade could have contributed more to the safety and honour of this army. Wood, brave generous and enterprising, died as he had lived without a feeling but for the honour of his country and the glory of her arms. His name and example will live to guide the soldier in the path of duty so long as true heroism is held in estimation. M'Ree lives to enjoy the approbation of every virtuous and generous mind, and to receive the reward due to his services and high military talents.

It is proper here to notice that although but one third of the enemy's force was on duty when his works were carried, the whole were brought into action while we were employed in destroying his cannon. We secured prisoners from seven of his regiments, and know that the 6th and 82d suffered severely in killed and wounded, yet these regiments were not upon duty.

Lieutenant-general Drummond broke up his camp during the night of the 21st and retired to his intrenchments behind the Chippewa. A party of our men came up with the rear of his army at Frenchman's creek; the enemy destroyed part of their stores, by setting fire to the buildings from which they were employed in conveying them. We found in and about their camp a considerable quantity of cannon ball, and upwards of one hundred stand of arms.

I send you enclosed herein a return of our loss. The return of prisoners inclosed does not include the stragglers that came in after the action.

I have the honour to be, sir, very respectfully, your most obedient humble servant,

JACOB BROWN.

Honourable Secretary of War.

Copy of a letter from brigadier-general Porter to major-general Brown.

Fort Erie, September 22, 1814.

SIR,

In executing the duty you have imposed upon me, of reporting the conduct of the officers and men composing the left column, which you was pleased to place under my command, in the sortie of the 17th instant, the pleasure I derive in representing to you the admirable conduct of the whole, is deeply chastened by sorrow for the loss of many brave and distinguished men.

Being obliged, from the nature of the ground, to act on foot, it was impossible that my personal observation should reach to every officer. Some part of this report must therefore rest upon the information of others.

It is the business of this communication to speak of the conduct of individuals; yet you will permit me to premise, although well known to yourself already, that the object of the left column was to penetrate, by a circuitous route, between the enemy's batteries, where one-third of his force was always kept on duty, and his main camp, and that it was subdivided into three divisions—the advance of two hundred riflemen, and a few Indians, commanded by colonel Gibson, and two columns moving parallel to, and thirty

yards distant from each other. The right column was commanded by lieutenant-colonel Wood, headed by four hundred infantry, under major Brook of the 23d, and followed by five hundred volunteers and militia, being parts of lieutenant-colonel Dobbin's, M'Barney's, and Fleming's regiments, and was intended to attack the batteries. The left column of five hundred militia was commanded by brigadier-general Davis, and comprised the commands of lieutenant-colonel Hopkins, Churchill and Crosby; and was intended to hold in check any re-enforcements from the enemy's camp; or both columns (circumstances requiring it, which frequently happened) to co-operate in the same object.

After carrying by storm in the handsomest style, a strong block-house in the rear of the third battery, making its garrison prisoners, destroying the three 24 pounders and their carriages in the third battery, and blowing up the enemy's magazine, and after co-operating with general Miller in taking the second battery, the gallant leaders of the three divisions all fell nearly at the same time; colonel Gibson at the second battery, and general Davis and lieutenant colonel Wood, in an assault upon the first.

Brigadier-general Davis, although a militia officer of little experience conducted on this occasion with all the coolness and bravery of a veteran, and fell while advancing upon the enemy's intrenchments. His loss as a citizen, as well as a soldier, will be severely felt in the patriotic county of Genesee. Colonel Gibson fully sustained the high military reputation, which he had before so justly acquired. You know how exalted an opinion I have always entertained of lieutenant-colonel Wood of the engineers. His conduct, on this day, was, what it uniformly has been, on every similar occasion, an exhibition of military skill, acute judgment, and heroic valour. Of the other regular officers, lieutenant-colonel Macdonald, and major Brook, senior in command, will report to you in relation to their respective divisions. Permit me, however, to say of these two officers, that much as was left to them by the fall of their distinguished leaders, they were able to sustain their parts in the most admirable manner, and they richly deserve the notice of the government.

Of the militia, I regret that the limits of a report will not permit me even to name all those, who on this occasion established claims to the gratitude of their fellow citizens; much less to particularize individual merit. Lieutenant-colonels Hopkins, M'Barney, Churchill, and Crosby, and majors Lee, Marcle, Wilson, Lawrence, Burr, Dunham, Kellogg, and Ganson, are entitled to the highest praise for their gallant conduct, their steady and persevering exertions. Lieutenant-colonel Dobbin being prevented by severe indisposition from taking the field, major Hall, assistant-inspector-general, volunteered his services to join major Lee in the command of the volunteer regiment; and major Lee and every other officer speaks in the highest terms of the gallant and good conduct of this young officer.

Captain Fleming, who commanded the Indians, was, as he always is, in the front of the battle. There is not a more intrepid soldier in the army. I should be ungrateful, were I to omit the names of captains Knapp and Hull of the

volunteers, and captain Parker and lieutenant Chatfield of the militia, by whose intrepidity I was, during the action, extricated from the most unpleasant situation. Captains Richardson, Buel, and Kennedy, lieutenants Parkhurst and Brown, and adjutants Dobbin, Bates, and Robinson, particularly distinguished themselves. The patriotic conduct of captain Elliott with twenty young gentlemen, who volunteered from Batavia, and of major Hubbard with fourteen men exempted by age from military duty, should not be omitted. They were conspicuous during the action.

You will excuse me, if I shall seem partial, in speaking of my own family, consisting of my brigade-major Frazer, my volunteer aid-de-camp Riddle, (both 1st lieutenants in the 15th infantry,) captain Bigger of the Canadian volunteers, Messrs. Williams and Delapierre, volunteer aids for the day, all of whom except Mr. Williams were wounded.

Lieutenants Frazer and Riddle were engaged for most of the preceding day with fatigue parties, cutting roads for the advance of the column through the swamp, and falling timber to the rear, and within one hundred and fifty yards of the enemy's right: which service they executed with so much address as to avoid discovery; and on the succeeding day they conducted the two columns to the attack. Frazer was severely wounded by a musket ball whilst spiking a gun on the second battery. Riddle, after the first battery was carried, descended into the enemy's magazine, and after securing (with the assistance of quarter-master Green of the volunteers, whose good conduct deserves much praise) a quantity of fixed ammunition, blew up the magazine, and suffered severely by the explosion. I must solicit, through you sir, the attention of the general government to these meritorious young men. Captain Bigger is an excellent officer, and rendered me much assistance, but was dangerously wounded. The other young gentlemen are citizens, and deserve much credit for their activity, and for having voluntarily encountered danger. My aid-de-camp, major Dox, was confined at Buffalo by sickness.

On the whole, sir, I can say of the regular troops attached to the left column, and of the veteran volunteers of lieutenant-colonel Dobbins regiment, that every man did his duty, and their conduct on this occasion reflects a new lustre on their former brilliant achievements. To the militia the compliment is justly due, and I could pay them no greater one than to say, that they were not surpassed by the heroes of Chippewa and Niagara in steadiness and bravery.

The studied intricacy of the enemy's defences, consisting not only of the breast-works connecting their batteries, but of successive lines of intrenchments for a hundred yards in the rear, covering the batteries, and enfilading each other, and the whole obstructed by abatis, brush, and felled timber, was calculated to produce confusion among the assailants, and led to several contests at the point of the bayonet. But by our double columns, any temporary irregularity in the one was always corrected by the other. Our success would probably have been more complete, but for the rain which unfortunately set in soon after we commenced our march, which rendered the fire of many of our muskets useless, and, by obscuring the sun, led to several unlucky mistakes. As an instance of this, a

body of fifty prisoners, who had surrendered, were ordered to the fort, in charge of a subaltern and fourteen volunteers; the officer, mistaking the direction, conducted them towards the British camp, in the route by which we had advanced, and they were retaken with the whole of the guard, excepting the officer and one man, who fought their way back. Several of our stragglers were made prisoners by the same mistake. But, sir, notwithstanding these accidents, we have reason to rejoice at our signal success in inflicting a vastly disproportionate injury on the enemy, and in wholly defeating all his plans of operation against this army.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,
your obedient servant,

P. B. PORTER, *Brigadier-general,*
Commanding Volunteers and Militia.

Major-general Brown, *Com'g &c.*

Report of the killed, wounded, and missing of the left division of the army at fort Erie, commanded by major-general Brown, in the sortie against the enemy's batteries on the 17th September, 1814.

TOTAL OF REGULARS.

Killed—1 lieutenant-colonel, 3 captains, 5 sergeants, 7 corporals, 44 privates.

Wounded—1 brigadier-general, 1 brigade-major, 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 2 captains, 11 subalterns, 1 principal musician, 12 sergeants, 11 corporals, 94 privates.

Missing—1 adjutant, 1 sergeant, 4 corporals, 1 musician, 36 privates.

TOTAL OF MILITIA, &c.

Killed—1 brigadier-general, 1 captain, 3 subalterns, 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, 12 privates.

Wounded—1 major-general, 2 aids-de-camp, 1 brigade-major, 2 captains, 2 subalterns, 4 sergeants 3 corporals, 65 privates.

Missing—1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 1 quarter-master, 2 captains, 4 subalterns, 9 sergeants, 13 corporals, 6 musicians, 136 privates.

GRAND TOTAL.

Killed—1 brigadier-general, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 4 captains, 3 subalterns, 6 sergeants, 8 corporals, 56 privates.

Wounded—1 major-general, 1 brigadier-general, 2 aids-de-camp, 2 brigade-majors, 1 colonel, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 4 captains, 13 subalterns, 1 principal musician, 16 sergeants, 14 corporals, 159 privates.

Missing—1 lieutenant-colonel, 1 major, 1 adjutant, 1 quarter-master, 2 captains, 4 subalterns, 10 sergeants, 17 corporals, 7 musicians, 172 privates.

Aggregate—officers, 45; non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, 466. Total, 511.

NAMES AND RANK OF OFFICERS.

Killed—lieutenant-colonel E. D. Wood, captain and brevet lieutenant-colonel of engineers.

Captain L. Bradford, 21st infantry.

Captain H. Hale, 11th infantry.

Captain L. G. A. Armistead, 1st riflemen.

Wounded—Staff, brigadier-general Ripley, 2d brigade, dangerously shot through the neck.

1st Lieutenant Crawford, 11th infantry, brigade-major, 1st brigade, slightly; shot in the arm.

9th Infantry, lieutenant-colonel Aspinwall, severely, left arm amputated.

Captain Ingersoll, slightly, in the head.

1st Lieutenant E. Childs, severely, bayonet wound through the thigh.

11th Infantry, 1st lieutenant W. F. Hale, dangerously, shot in the body.

2d Lieutenant J. Clark, severely, in the body.

3d Lieutenant Stevenson, severely, through the thigh.

3d Lieutenant Davis, dangerously, through the body.

19th Infantry—major Trimble, dangerously, shot through the body.

Ensign Neely, slightly, shot in the thigh.

21st Infantry—Ensign Cummings, severely, in the arm.

23d Infantry—1st lieutenant Brown, slightly, in the arm.

Ensign O'Fling, mortally, since dead.

1st Riflemen—captain Ramsay, severely, in the groin.

3d Lieutenant Cobb, severely in the body.

4th Riflemen—colonel James Gibson, mortally, died the 16th instant.

1st Lieutenant Gantt, severe wounds in the arm and side.

Missing—1st lieutenant Ballard, adjutant 4th riflemen, prisoner.

OF THE MILITIA.

Killed—brigadier-general Davis, of volunteer brigade.

Captain Buel, of lieutenant-colonel Crosby's regiment.

Lieutenant Brown, of lieutenant-colonel M'Burney's regiment.

Lieutenant W. Belknap, of lieutenant-colonel Fleming's regiment.

Ensign Blakesley, of lieutenant-colonel M'Burney's regiment.

Wounded—Staff, major-general P. B. Porter, sword wound in the hand.

1st lieutenant Frazer, 13th infantry, brigade-major, severely, in the leg.

1st lieutenant Riddle, 15th infantry, acting aid-de-camp, slight contusion.

Captain Bigger, N. Y. volunteers, acting aid, severely, through the breast and shoulder.

Lieutenant-colonel Dobbin's regiment—captain Knap, in the hip.

Lieutenant Baily, in the side.

Lieutenant-colonel M'Burney's regiment, captain Haie, wounded and prisoner.

Lieutenant-colonel Hopkin's regiment—lieutenant Gillet, through the thigh.

Missing—Lieutenant-colonel W. L. Churchill, major E. Wilson, quarter-master, O. Wilcox, captain Crouch, captain Case, lieutenant Case, ensigns Chambers, Clark, Church, prisoners.

G. K. GARDNER, A. G.

Return of prisoners taken in the sortie from Fort Erie, on the 17th of September, 1814.

Regiment of Watteville—2 majors, 3 captains, 3 lieutenants, 1 assistant surgeon, 4 staff sergeants, 7 sergeants, 7 corporals, 1 drummer, and 204 privates. Total, 232.

Royal artillery—9 privates.

1st Regiment royal Scotts—2 sergeants, 16 privates.

6th Regiment—1 sergeant, 9 privates.

8th or King's Regiment—1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 8 sergeants, 9 corporals, 66 privates.

82d Regiment—9 privates.

Copy of a letter from Major-general Brown to the Secretary of war, dated

Head-quarters, Camp Fort Erie, October 1st 1814.

SIR—Looking over my official account of the battle of the 17th ult. I find that the names of the regiments which composed general Miller's command, have not been given. As I believe it even more important to distinguish corps than individuals, I am anxious to correct the mistake. General Miller on that day commanded the remains of the 9th and 11th infantry, and a detachment of the 19th. Of three field officers who were attached to them, two were severely wounded, lieutenant-colonel Aspinwall, of the 9th, gallantly leading his men to the attack upon the enemy's intrenchments, and major Trimble, of the 19th, who was shot within their works, conducting with great skill and bravery. A detachment of the 17th regiment was attached to the 21st.

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

JACOB BROWN.

Honourable Secretary of War.